

## **Environmental Protection Agency**

### **Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation**

#### **Solicitation Notice**

#### **Partnership to Promote Innovation in Environmental Practices**

#### **Overview Information**

Federal Agency Name: Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation; National Center for Environmental Innovation

Funding Opportunity Title: Partnership to Promote Innovation in Environmental Practice

Announcement Type: Request For Proposals

Funding Opportunity Number: USEPA-AO-OPEI-05-02

Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number - 66.611 Environmental Policy and Innovation Grants

Dates: Announcement - March 7, 2005

Deadline for Proposals - April 21, 2005

Decision - May 2005

#### **Executive Summary**

The Environmental Protection Agency's National Center for Environmental Innovation (NCEI) is soliciting proposals from institutions that are interested in promoting innovations that can improve environmental results from State and federal programs.

EPA is seeking proposals to explore innovative environmental policies practices and to support mechanisms by which new approaches can be shared and discussed by federal and state environmental practitioners. The goal is to increase understanding of new approaches, to facilitate use of proven concepts, and to encourage more innovation in environmental programs. EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this solicitation. The amount of the award will be \$300,000 for a period of up to four years. Eligible recipients include States, territories, Indian Tribes, interstate organizations, intrastate organizations, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, and individuals. Nonprofit organizations described in Section

501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For profit organizations are generally not eligible for funding.

## **Full Text**

### **Section 1: Funding Opportunity Description:**

EPA's National Center for Environmental Innovation (NCEI) promotes new ways to achieve better environmental results. NCEI's work includes developing and testing new approaches, evaluating how well new approaches work, and sharing and applying the lessons learned to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of environmental programs.

Consistent with EPA's *Innovation Strategy*

(<http://www.epa.gov/innovation/strategy.htm>), NCEI is especially interested in supporting State innovation. In 2000, EPA sponsored the first State/EPA Environmental Innovation Symposium to showcase environmental innovations that can improve results in State programs. A second symposium was held in 2003. (Information about these events can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/innovation/symposia.htm> ). Evaluations from these events, along with discussion with State commissioners, indicate that States have a strong interest in additional symposia that allow participants to share experiences and results from innovative environmental programs and policies.

This solicitation supports Goal 5 of EPA's Strategic Plan - Improve Environmental Performance through Pollution Prevention and Innovation. It is designed to enable information exchange and learning by State and EPA employees that are interested in new approaches for achieving environmental results.

While EPA will have participants at the symposia, the primary goal of this project is to identify and highlight environmental innovations that can help States learn about new ways to achieve environmental results. To this end, the project should be designed to:

- S Identify and showcase successful, innovative projects and programs that have accomplished important environmental results at the federal, state, and local levels;
- S Facilitate information transfer so that proven approaches can be used by other States and federal programs to achieve environmental results;
- S Stimulate ideas for new innovative initiatives and pilot projects;
- S Enable discussion about specific issues facing innovators, such as how to replicate successful innovations on a larger scale (e.g., from a pilot project at one facility to a

program for the entire sector) or in other programs (e.g., from use in the air program to the water program), and how to sustain innovations over time so that projects continue evolving to reflect new knowledge, experience, and/or technology;

- S Expand the network of State and federal environmental practitioners who are interested in applying and advancing new approaches to environmental protection.

The work will involve planning up to two symposia over a four-year period that bring together State and EPA environmental practitioners to share information and engage in a dialogue about experiences and policy issues related to innovative approaches. Planning will be done by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the recipient, EPA and States. The Steering Committee, which will have a majority State membership, will assist with analyzing environmental innovations, developing symposia agendas, identifying appropriate speakers and presenters, and promoting the event within their respective organizations. The recipient will also be encouraged to invite States or their representative organizations (i.e., the Environmental Council of the States) to co-sponsor the symposia.

EPA is interested in supporting the first symposia in late 2005, and a second symposium approximately two years later. EPA funding will be used to support the costs associated with hosting the symposia, therefore, recipients will not be charged a registration fee. For each event, the recipient will arrange for meals and refreshments for up to 300 attendees in order to assure attendees' full participation. The recipient will offer up to 50 scholarships to pay travels costs for non-federal participants (or more if the budget allows). While State and EPA Steering Committee members may advise the recipient on these scholarships, final decisions will be made by the recipient.

The recipient will evaluate the expected costs for potential symposia locations and provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee. This recommendation will be weighed with other factors in making a final decision (e.g., a particular State being interested in hosting, other meetings in a location or within a certain time frame that might facilitate State participation). In planning the symposium, the recipient will incorporate as many environmentally-sound techniques, as possible. (A listing of green meeting techniques can be found on the EPA green meeting website at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings/> ).

The recipient will prepare evaluations to gauge how well the symposia meet participants expectations. The results will be summarized and shared with EPA in order to assess overall project effectiveness, and inform planning for additional symposia in the future.

In addition to organizing the symposia, the recipient will compile all information presented at the symposia on a publicly available web site. These resources will help extend the learning that occurs at the symposia to other State and EPA employees, as well

as other interested stakeholders.

## **Section 2: Award Information:**

The National Center for Environmental Innovation anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement in the amount of \$300,000 for up to four years. This funding will be divided equally to support two symposia. Depending on the availability of funds, EPA anticipates providing \$100,000 in May 2005 and \$50,000 in early fiscal year 2006 for a symposium in late 2005. (EPA fiscal years begin on October 1 and end on September 30). Contingent upon future Congressional funding, EPA anticipates funding the remainder of this agreement once decisions are made about a second symposium. NCEI reserves the right to make no awards in this competition.

Cooperative agreements entail substantial Federal involvement in the project. This may include EPA's review and approval of project scope and phases; participation in and collaboration on, various phases of the work; review of all draft and final products; approval of the substantive terms of contracts; and regular e-mail, phone, and conference calls with the recipient.

## **Section 3: Eligibility Information:**

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible recipients include States, territories, Indian Tribes, interstate organizations, intrastate organizations, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, and individuals. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For profit organizations are generally not eligible for funding.

### Cost-sharing Requirements

There are no cost-sharing requirements.

## **Section 4: Application and Submission Information:**

### Address to Request Application Package

Applicants must complete an SF 424 application. This form and other requirements for a complete application package can be found online at:

[http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how\\_to\\_apply.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm)

## Content of Application

The narrative statement in the application must be no more than 10 pages (on 8.5 x 11-inch sized, consecutively numbered pages, and of standard type (10-12 characters per inch). It must include a narrative description, itemized budget, and documentation of qualifications. Any attachments, appendices, and reference lists associated with these three sections may be attached, but are included in the 10 page limitation.

The information needed for each section is described below:

### *Narrative Description*

- S Project title
- S Name of applicant
- S Name of project contact, address, telephone and email address
- S Narrative that describes the applicant's past experience with evaluating and promoting environmental policy innovations, and approach to accomplishing the objectives set forth in section 1 of this solicitation.
- S Project deliverables and milestones, along with target dates for each one.

### *Measurable Results*

EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," establishes an EPA policy for addressing environmental results under EPA assistance agreements. It requires EPA to 1) link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan, 2) ensure that outputs and outcomes are appropriately addressed in assistance agreement competitive funding announcements, work plans and performance reports, and 3) consider how results from completed assistance agreement projects contribute to the Agency's programmatic goals and objectives.

The application should include a statement that explains how the work intended links to EPA's Strategic Plan, and include measures for tracking outcomes or outputs, as appropriate. Outcomes mean the result, effect or consequences that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. They may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Outputs mean an environmental activity, effort and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative, but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

### *Itemized Budget*

The budget should include costs associated with evaluating innovations, and planning and organizing 2 separate 1.5 - 2 day symposia, with up to 300 participants at each one. These costs might include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### Labor Expenses

- S Personnel
- S Fringe Benefits

#### Direct Expenses

- S Materials and Supplies
- S Communications (phone, email, fax)
- S Travel (for recipient staff and for up to 50 scholarships for non-federal participants)
- S Equipment
- S Facilities
- S Catering

#### Indirect Expenses

### *Qualifications*

- S Evidence of experience in evaluating environmental innovations in federal, state, and local government programs.
- S Evidence of experience in organizing fora that enable successful information exchange and learning by participants
- S Experience with organizations and networks that evaluate and promote environmental policy innovations
- S Biographical information for key personnel

### Submission Information

The deadline for submitting an application is April 21, 2005, 5 p.m. EST. No late applications will be accepted. Applicants may send their applications through mail service or electronically. Please note that due to heightened security requirements, there may be substantial delays in mail service to EPA. Hence, EPA strongly encourages applicants to send applications electronically. Receipt of electronic applications will be acknowledged by a return email notification from NCEI. NCEI will acknowledge paper applications within two weeks of receipt.

Electronic applications must be sent to [State Innovation Grants@epa.gov](mailto:State_Innovation_Grants@epa.gov) .

Applicants choosing to submit paper applications should mail one original and two copies to the EPA contact identified in this section below. Please also note that the address varies depending on whether you are mailing your proposal or arranging for hand delivery.

If you are sending your proposal via hand delivery (e.g., Federal Express, Courier, UPS), send it to:

Sandy Germann

US EPA

Room 645C

4930 Page Road

Research Triangle Park, NC 27703

919-541-3061

If you are mailing your proposal, send it to:

Sandy Germann

US EPA

MC C604-02

Research Triangle Park, NC 27711

### Funding Restrictions

The applicable cost principles are found in OMB Circular A-21 for educational institutions, OMB Circular A-87 for State and Local governments and Indian Tribes, and OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations.

This project includes funds for meals and refreshments for all participants at the symposia. EPA funds can be used for these purposes so long as these items are deemed necessary to allow full participation and assure that the main goal of the event - information sharing among State and EPA innovators - is achieved.

While EPA funds cannot be used for entertainment purposes, EPA can cosponsor an event that has a social component (such as a modest reception), so long as the event has a primarily educational purpose that is related to the Agency's mission. EPA funds cannot be used for events that have a primary purpose of entertaining participants.

None of the funds for this project may be used to pay for travel of federal employees or other costs associated with federal participation in this project.

## **Section 5: Application Review Information:**

### Review and Selection Process

NCEI will review the proposals and make a funding recommendation to the EPA Grants Division based on the Review Criteria listed below. NCEI's review of applicants' programmatic capability will be based on information submitted by the applicant (e.g., past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project; history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements) and other information sources, including Agency files. The final decision regarding the award will be made by EPA's Grants Division.

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>.

### Review Criteria

#### *Technical Soundness*

Applicant's proposal is technically sound, structured to accomplish the objectives set forth in Section 1, and includes measures for demonstrating success.

#### *Qualifications and Experiences*

Applicant has the programmatic capability needed to successfully carry out the project.

Applicant has experience in analyzing a wide variety of environmental innovations (air, water, waste, multi-media) in government programs.

Applicant has organized forums for environmental professionals that enable interaction and learning by participants.

Applicant has experience with organizations and networks that evaluate and promote environmental policy innovations

Applicant has knowledge of expert professionals who can provide symposium



participants with insights related to spurring creativity and innovation in the workplace, leading change, and related topics.

Applicant has experience implementing green meeting techniques.

Applicant has experience creating web sites that enable effective communications.

#### Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

EPA expects to make a selection in May 2005. EPA anticipates giving official notice of award in the June - July 2005 time frame. As described in Section 2 of this announcement, EPA anticipates funding this work incrementally over a four year period.

### **Section 6: Award Administration Information**

#### Award Notices:

The EPA Grants Division will give official notice of award. Applicants who are not selected will be notified by mail within 30 days after the final selection is made.

#### Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

The recipient must comply with all requirements set forth in 40 CFR, Part 30 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations), as applicable, or 40 CFR, Part 31 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements to State and Local Governments), as applicable.

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

#### Reporting

Progress Reports - Progress reports must be submitted on a quarterly basis within 30 days of each reporting period. A final technical report must be submitted within 90 days of the expiration of the approved project period.

## **Section 7: Agency Contacts:**

Sandy Germann

US EPA

National Center for Environmental Innovation

MC C604-02

Building C, Room 645

79 TW Alexander Dr

RTP NC 27711

919-541-3061

germann.sandy@epa.gov

## **Section 8: Additional Information**

Grant applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. Use of the DUNS number government-wide will provide a means to identify entities receiving those awards and their business relationships. The identifier will be used for tracking purposes, and to validate address and point of contact information.

Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711. Individuals who would personally receive a grant or cooperative agreement award from the Federal government apart from any business or non-profit organization they may operate are exempt from this requirement. The website where an organization can obtain a DUNS number is: <http://www.dnb.com/>. This takes 30 business days and there is no cost unless the organization requests expedited (1-day) processing, which includes a fee of \$40.